

GHOST SHIPS OF THE SEA

Strange Stories Told of the Mysteries of the Ocean.

The "Flying Dutchman" the Best Known of the Many Spectral Vessels—A Phantom Craft Which Haunts the New England Coast

Landmen boast of their haunted houses and the weird spirits that dance in country graveyards at midnight. But there's not a house, no matter how black and dismal and how far back from the public road it may be sitting, nor how many murders may have been committed within its walls years ago, that can compare in

supernatural terrors with the haunted ships with their crews of dead men that haunt the trackless waves of the ocean. And there's not a ghost on land, no mat-

ter how many graveyards he may prowl around, nor how many old mansions he may rattle chains in and groan and disport himself that can hold up his head

There is an air of vagueness and unreality anyhow about the ocean that makes it naturally a more fit abiding place for ghosts than the prosaic shore. The great

with its centuries of nameless horrors still locked firmly in its silent bosom, is the proper place for ghosts. And so it is no wonder that they who go down to the sea in ships believe as firmly in spirits and spirit ships and roving hulks with crews of men dead centuries ago as they believe in their own existence.

One of the spectral ships best known to landsmen generally is the Flying Dutchman, with which Captain Marryat made his readers acquainted. The Flying Dutchman was trying to round the

part of the seventeenth century. The ship was repeatedly driven back by contrary winds and tides, until the ship's captain, Vanderdecken, swore a fearful oath he would round it if it took till Judgment Day. Vanderdecken was a

at his word, and now for three centuries he and his worn crew have been battling to round the cape. Sailors watch with fear and trembling when their ships are rounding the Horn, afraid that every moment may bring into view the spectral Flying Dutchman. It is believed that every appearance of the Flying Dutchman will be followed by death or misfortune to some of the crew of the ship that sees the ghost vessel.

In the private journal of the late Duke of Cornwall and York, during their cruise on the *Bacchante* in 1879-1882, an account is given in their experience with the Flying Dutchman, which they fell in with near Sydney. The Duke wrote: "July 11, 1881, at 4 a. m., the Flying Dutchman crossed our bows. A strange red light, as of a phantom ship all aglow, in the midst of which light the masts,

tant, stood out in bold relief. As it came up the lookout man on the forecabin reported it as close on the port bow. The night being clear and the sea calm, thirteen persons altogether saw it, but whether it was Van Diemen of the Flying Dutchman or who else must remain unknown. The Tourmaline and Cleopatra, which were sailing on our starboard

the strange red lights. At a quarter to 11 a. m. the ordinary seaman who had this morning reported the Flying Dutchman fell from the foretopmast crossrees and

was smashed to atoms * * * At the next port we came to the admiral also was smitten down.

On the rocky-bound coast of New England is not infrequently seen the ghost of the ship *Palatine*, whose appearance scudding in the teeth of a gale is always supposed to betoken disaster.

The *Palatine* was a Dutch trading vessel that was wrecked on Block Island in 1732. The wreckers, who by means of false beacons along the shore had lured the ship to destruction, then looted the vessel. They stripped the ship of everything movable and then set fire to the hull to conceal the traces of their work. As the boat, lifted up by the tide, floated away down the channel a piercing scream was suddenly heard from the cabin and a woman clad in white, but with a face of red iron, was seen standing in front of the mainmast. She had been a passenger on the ship and

had hidden below to escape the wreckers. She burned to death in sight of the people along the shore, so that the time she spent in the water was the time she spent in the flames. The fact that a woman in white standing in front of the mainmast, has been seen hundreds of times by sailors cruising in those waters.

The Dead Ship of Salem is well known off the Massachusetts shore. Just 200 years ago the ship was ready to sail to England, when two mysterious people, appearing in the night, and dressed in white, before, came hurriedly aboard and secured passage. They were a young man and woman of strange but forbidding beauty. The ship was detained so long by adverse winds that the townspeople began to suspect witchcraft and prophesied disaster. But the skipper jeered at their fears, and when the wind changed put out to sea and never returned.

No word or sign of that ship or its living freight was ever seen or heard again.

But later that same year incoming vessels reported having met a craft with striking hull and luminous sails and sails spinning along with every cloth drawing in the teeth of one of the wildest gales. A crew of skeletons manned the ship while on the quarterdeck stood arm in arm a handsome pair, a young man and a woman.

Down deep in solitude of the lonely everglades the sailors say is a ghostly pirate ship doomed to forever cruise about in the muddy bogs and shallow grasslands.

Three centuries ago a buccaneering crew that raided the Spanish main captured a merchant brig off Cape Florida and speedily rifled it of its rich cargo.

Furious at the magnitude of the loss, the furious resistance of the gallant crew of the merchantman the pirate captain cruelly forced everyone of the crew to walk the plank, with fiendish ingenuity keeping the skipper's wife to watch their deaths.

New York Commercial Advertiser.

(C. C. Nutting, in Science.)

The general impression that high temperature is more favorable than a low one for the best development of animal life is certainly not true of marine animals in general, whatever may be the facts concerning some special groups. If

Other conditions are favorable, a luxuriant fauna will be developed in any temperature short of the freezing point of salt water. The Gulf Stream, which is a sudden one, is sometimes the cause of oceanic tragedies of frightful extent, a fact illustrated by the following example: A ship was wrecked on the coast of New England lying upon the bottom on what is known as the Gulf Stream slope, off the New England coast. The water was normally comparatively warm, coming as it does from the superheated region of the Gulf of Mexico.

During a series of unusually severe gales in the summer of 1882 this mass of water was displaced and was replaced by the cooler water. As a result, millions and millions of these fish were killed. The fish were normally covered the surface of the sea for hundreds of square miles. So great was the loss of life that the fish were so scarce that the life-boat were exterminated. Fortunately, however, the region has been recognized, partly from the fact that the fish have been taken during the last two seasons.